

embodiment, the reader 32 and asset controller 34 are an integrated system, herein called the reader system 200 which will be discussed below with reference to Figs. 7-8 and 13. In the illustrated embodiment, the asset lookup service 40 is provided by an asset lookup server 300 (discussed below with reference to Figs. 9-10 and 14) and the resource service 36 is provided by a resource server 400 (discussed below with reference to Figs. 11-12 and 15). The asset lookup server 300 and the resource server 400 may be networked systems accessed by the reader system 200 in any manner known in the art (e.g., via the Internet).

As shown in Fig. 7, the reader system 200 may include one or more communication ports 202 which may include a tag interrogator 212 such as a transceiver, magnetic strip reader, laser reader, optical character recognition device, or other device suitable to determine tag information from tag 10. The reader system 200 also includes one or more processors 204, an internal date and time clock 206, and storage 208 which includes one or more computer programs 222 defining instructions, which when executed, instruct the computer to perform the operations of the reader and asset controller. The storage also may include an asset database 210. The asset database will now be described in more detail in connection with Fig. 8 and the programs 222 will be discussed further below with respect to Fig. 13.

Fig. 8 illustrates an example table 250 for the asset database 210, which includes one or more records 252. In general, each record associates a global routing prefix 604 with at least one asset identifier 20, and optionally, additional information about the asset. In this example, each record 252 includes a global routing prefix 604, an asset identifier 20 including an asset type identifier 22 and a serial number 24, a model 254, size 256, color 258, asset manufacturer 260, asset manager 261, location 262, temperature 264, manufacturing date 266, expiration date 268, asset weight 270, and asset lookup service URL 38. Additional data that may be stored in the asset database is further described in co-pending application titled METHOD AND SYSTEM FOR COMMUNICATING WITH IDENTIFICATION TAGS, filed ~~XXX~~ 3/10/2004, and having attorney docket number MSFTI-1-22175, which is incorporated herein by reference in its entirety. Entries in the asset database are